The following steps are being taken for expansion of bivoltine sericulture:-

- Through Research & Development efforts of Central Silk Board improved hybrid silkworm breeds and bivoltine breeds have been developed.
- The centrally sponsored schemes of X plan period *i.e.* catalytic development programme provide greater thrust to bivoltine sericulture by undertaking development and expansion of host plantations, development of farm infrastructure, upgradation of reeling and processing technologies, enterprise development programmes, data base development programmes etc.
- During X plan period an enhanced amount of Rs. 450 crores has been earmarked for implementation of Plan schemes, out of which 173.73 crores is for implementation of catalytic development programme.
- Under the III phase of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) assisted project, technical support is being provided to the State of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh & Tamil Nadu for expansion and promotion of bivoltine sericulture.

Protection to Indian Garment Exporters in WTO

1170. SHRI G.K. VASAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take steps to protect the interest of Indian garments exporters in WTO;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government have been taking appropriate steps to protect the interests of Indian textiles export industry including garments in the WTO. Some of the recent steps taken are given below:-

(i) India has raised a dispute under the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of WTO challenging the zero cutoms duty concession accorded by European Communities to the ready-made garments and made-up articles originating from some of our competing countries under the special tariff arrangements to combat drug production and trafficking of its new GSP Scheme, which are perceived by India to cause adverse trade effects on our industry.

(ii) The United States had on 31st January 2003 requested WTO's Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures that the export competitiveness of textile and apparel exports from India be determined on the basis of a computation undertaken by the WTO Secretariat in accordance with Article 27.6(b) of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures. The products for which the request was made included all textiles and apparel products under Harmonized System Nomenclature chapters 50-59 and 60-63. India has sought certain clarifications from the WTO Secretariat in this regard.

(iii) India along with the certain members of International Textiles & Clothing Bureau (ITCB) made a submission in the WTO General Council for availability of flexibility of 'Carry-Forward' of quotas in the year 2004.

(iv) India along with other ITCB members raised the issue *inter-alia* of advancing the application of the higher "growth-on-growth" factor of 27% w.e.f. 1st January 2000, which was otherwise under the Agreement on Textiles & Clothing (ATC) to be applied on 1st January 2002. However, no recommendations could be forwarded by the Council for Trade in Goods to the General Council in this regard.

Boosting export of handloom products

1171. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to SARS epidemic that threatened South East Asian countries the Indian Handloom sector had suffered a loss of one thousand crore of export earnings;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the steps contemplated by Government to boost the export of handloom products to bridge the shortfall in the export earning?